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SUBJECT: ICCAT CHAIR WEIGHS TAIWAN'S PROSPECTS

REF: 05 TAIPEI 4832

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: International Commission on Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) Chairman William Hogarth and advisors met with Taiwan officials on September 22 to discuss Taiwan's progress in meeting ICCAT recommendations to reduce its fishing capacity. Taiwan officials presented data to support their efforts to abide by the ICCAT requirements and hoped that their pre-2005 fishing quota would be restored. Hogarth was pleased with the progress made since the last ICCAT meeting, but was guarded in his views on how much quota ICCAT would likely allocate Taiwan this time. He urged tighter control of Taiwan's fishing fleet and better data management to ensure compliance with ICCAT regulations. End Summary.

COA AND MOFA HOPE TO RESTORE FISHING QUOTA  
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12. (SBU) William Hogarth, current chair of ICCAT and Assistant Administrator for Fisheries at the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), met Taiwan officials on September 22 to discuss its progress to comply with ICCAT recommendation 05-02 requiring Taiwan reduce its fishing capacity. Accompanying Hogarth were Kelly Denit, NMFS office of International Affairs, Robert Hayes, U.S. Recreational Commissioner to ICCAT, Randi Parks Thomas, U.S. Commercial Commissioner to ICCAT and AIT Econoff.

13. (SBU) Hogarth first met Vice-Minister Lee Jen-Chyuan of the Council on Agriculture (parent agency of the Fisheries Agency). Lee said Taiwan has made serious efforts to control the size of its fishing fleet as evidenced by scrapping of excess vessels and implementation of fishery management measures, including stationing observers on ships and at ports to conduct inspections. Lee said Taiwan had sent inspection teams to Capetown and Las Palmas to check on the activities of its fishing boats. Hogarth said he was pleased with Taiwan's enforcement efforts in the Caribbean where 23 Taiwan vessels (ranging from 20-24 meters in length) operate under the St. Vincent flag, and one under Panamanian flag.

14. (SBU) At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hogarth met with Vice-minister Yang Tzu-pao and International Organizations Chief John Chen. They both reiterated COA's concern about Taiwan being able to restore its big-eye tuna quota at the next meeting. Hogarth urged Taiwan to continue to work on compliance issues and said he is willing to work with Taiwan

to help organize technical exchanges, workshops on fishing capacity workshops, and other training programs. Bob Hayes noted he heard from some fellow ICCAT members that although Taiwan was not a full member, it was occupying much of the ICCAT agenda. Therefore, he and Hogarth both felt that Taiwan's voluntary contribution to ICCAT's funding was appreciated by the membership. (Note: Taiwan pays a little more than half what full members pay. End note.)

#### GOOD PROGRESS ON BOAT SCRAPPING

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15. (SBU) Hogarth also met with Fisheries Agency(FA) staff and reviewed their progress over the last year. FA Director-General Shieh Dah-wen listed steps Taiwan has taken to meet ICCAT recommendation 05-02. Foremost was Taiwan's progress in dismantling 160 fishing vessels. To date, 70 vessels have been scrapped, an additional 42 vessels have been earmarked for reef building, leaving 48 vessels to be scrapped by the end of the year. Better monitoring of Taiwan vessels will also be possible with the required installation of Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) on all of its high-seas fishing vessels. This system not only allows vessel tracking but also lets the ships communicate with the ports and report fish catch volume. Shieh also reported that Taiwan's Legislative Yuan has approved a five-year budget to strengthen fisheries management.

16. (SBU) Hogarth stressed the need for more complete data on fish catches and noted that the Japanese wanted a breakdown of species on the inspection forms. Hogarth brought up Canadian concerns that Taiwan had allegedly built 300 new boats of under 24 meters length in the last 18 months and were using them under flags of convenience. Shieh denied these allegations, and said that the FA will provide data to prove them groundless.

#### RESTORATION OF FULL FISHING QUOTA UNLIKELY

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17. (SBU) The FA screened a video presentation to demonstrate Taiwan's progress in reducing its fishing capacity since the last ICCAT meeting. Hogarth said it was a well-prepared presentation that should be shown at the next ICCAT meeting. Shieh said that Taiwan hoped to have its tuna fishing quota restored to its original level. Hogarth said that Taiwan could hope for a partial restoration of its quota depending on how ICCAT received their supporting documentation. NMFS personnel told Taiwan that one of the important aspects in ICCAT's consideration on how much quota to allocate Taiwan rested on Taiwan's ability to formulate sound fishery plans for the future.

#### COMMENT

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17. (SBU) Based on the presentations made at the meeting, Taiwan has indeed made progress since the 2005 ICCAT meeting. However, all efforts seemed geared toward meeting the ICCAT recommendations from 2005. A long term plan for Taiwan fisheries was not evident, raising questions whether the current measures will be sustainable in the long run. End Comment.

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